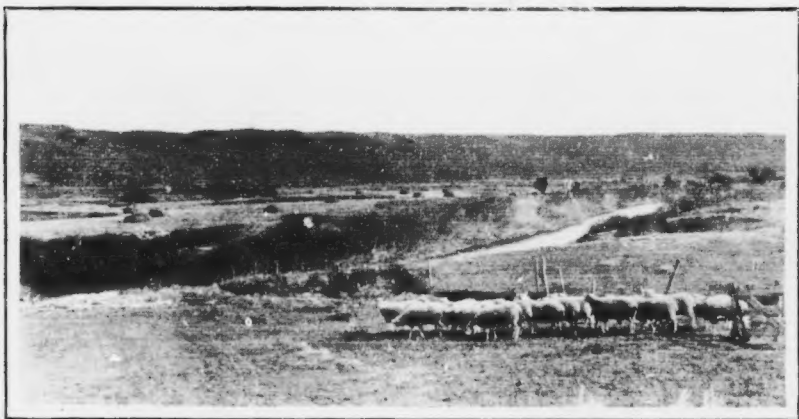


Not in Dec. 7/25/18

THE BRANDONS *of* SASKATCHEWAN



IN THE ASSINIBOINE VALLEY



THE INDUSTRIAL AND TOWNSITE DEPARTMENT

OF THE

CANADIAN **NORTHERN** **RAILWAY**



IS prepared to furnish valuable information to, and will co-operate with, Homeseekers, Manufacturers, and Wholesale and Retail Merchants, in all lines of business, who are seeking locations.

THE INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT IS ORGANIZED

to give reliable information regarding business opportunities on the line.

THE ENTIRE LINE

of the Canadian Northern Railway runs through the great wheat belt of Western Canada, where practically every acre can be put under cultivation. There is no waste land, and nowhere are crops more certain and markets more accessible. In no section are there better educational advantages, greater social opportunities, or more healthful climatic conditions. Values are low compared with other sections of the country with like conditions and soil. If you are seeking any kind of location, write

DAVIDSON & McRAE

General Agents

Industrial and Townsite
Department

WINNIPEG, CANADA



ROSSER AVENUE, BRANDON.

The Brandons of Saskatchewan

Where the flourishing conditions of the Assiniboine Valley are being reproduced by the Canadian Northern Railway

Talking yesterday with a Manitoban about changes in the West, I happened to mention Brandon.

"Did you know Brandon in the old days?" asked my friend.

"Sure," said I, "I was there in the eighties, when not a man in town was believed to be worth ten thousand dollars. Clifford Sifton was a young lawyer who occasionally helped out at Methodist meetings in the country. I was at one of his first meetings when he ran for the Manitoba legislature. His opponent was a Mr. Macdonald, who is a small-town lawyer yet; but in a part of the country to which he went because he lost faith in the prairie country. Sifton held on to the West because he believed in it; and he had a unique share in spreading his faith over half of the civilized world."

I was living about eight miles out of Brandon when the Dominion Government bought the land for the Experimental Farm. It belonged to Charlie Stuart, whose house in the Assiniboine Valley was the last we passed before crossing the river, just before entering town.



ENTRANCE TO EXPERIMENTAL FARM, BRANDON.

**The Government
bought a Farm.**

One afternoon when Charlie and I were working together, helping Dan McMillan to thrash his great crop of 1887, a man came from town and called him off for a few minutes' conversation. When my partner returned he told me that, after many interviews, he had at last agreed to sell his farm to the Government for an experimental station. He worked silently for a few minutes, and then, looking down the trail to the vanishing emissary from Ottawa, he began to swear.

"I wish to Sam Hill," he said, "that that fellow wasn't so far away. I'd have him back and tell him I don't want any blamed Government to get my place. But I guess I'll have to stand by my word."

And that's how the Brandon Experimental Farm was sold. Unless my memory has failed, the price paid for Charlie Stuart's half-section including the buildings, was twelve hundred dollars.

When I drive through the fine avenues of Manitoba maples that make the Brandon Experimental Farm one of the beauty spots between Winnipeg and the Mountains, I always think of the day when the first white owner agreed to confer a great benefit on the town which, at that time was, I believe the greatest primary wheat shipping point in the West. I marvel, also, at the price for which it was sold.

**Full-blown, full-
grown City now.**

Brandon is not the same town as it was in those days. In truth to call it a town is to insult it. It is a full-blown, but not a full-grown, city. It doth not yet appear what it shall be. It is no longer in the first flight of wheat shippers. Its growth is explained by that very fact—which looks like a paradox, but isn't.



IN THE JACKFISH LAKE COUNTRY.

When I was first familiar with it, Brandon was on the main line of one railway, with no immediate prospects of any others coming in. It now has two other transcontinental railways and is the centre of I don't know how many branches. It was then the market town of a tremendous area of farming country, and received wheat from farmers fifty and sixty miles north and south, very few of whom could buy anything at a store on the way.

Instead of being only the centre of a great many pioneer farmers, who were struggling to make the best of an untried country, whose soil they did not begin to understand, Brandon is now a city of wholesalers for many prosperous towns that are the first centres of farmers who thoroughly understand the conditions of the soil from which they easily extract liberal prosperity. Brandon has become the commercial capital of half a province, and the Canadian Northern Railway which was undreamt of in those days, is building a new station and hotel that will cost a hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

**Farmers want
more and more
land.**

The Canadian Northern is the second great railway of Canada. Indeed, it is the first railway of Manitoba, for it has more mileage in the senior prairie province than any other. In its progress from nothing in 1896 to the second place in the railways of Canada it came to Brandon several years ago. Two years since, it gave Brandon her first competitive connection with Regina and the Saskatchewan Valley—a connection which has since developed into a direct, fast route to Prince Albert and Edmonton, and which will, by next fall, furnish a new and short line to Calgary also.



JACKFISH LAKE.

But the growing wealth of Brandon has had effects that are no more visible in Brandon than they are in Timbuctoo. The harvesting of one good crop after another enlarged farmers' ambitions, and gave them the means to satisfy them. There is nothing so mysterious or so strong as land hunger. All the land around Brandon was taken up when I first went there. The men on the spot could not all extend their borders. A few had to clear out.

C. N. R came to the old-timers.

There was something like the movement that has given a unique turn to agricultural conditions in the United States. Some preferred to use their growing surpluses in the purchase of land adjacent to that on which they had originally settled. Others decided on going through some of the experiences of the pioneer, in order to acquire more land more cheaply than was possible in the older settlement. So they sold out to their neighbours, and went to new districts, where the land is just as good as, and in many cases even better than, in the lower valley of the Assiniboine.

That is why I could take you to fine farms away up in the Saskatchewan Valley that began with the splendid equipment you generally associate with the senior places of the West. For example, in the Battleford country I know a family that was prominent around Brandon twenty years ago, and is equally well-known on the broad slopes of the Mississippi of the North.

Perhaps some of this migration is due to the pioneering instinct which is the basic human asset in all new countries. The desire to subdue the earth is inherent with many of us, even when we don't recognise it. And so some of the old-timers of Brandon are to be found in the upper reaches of the Saskatchewan, ahead of the main stream of immigration there, as they had once been along the Assiniboine. And the Canadian Nor-



1910 CROP ON FARM OF J. F. SMITH, SHELLBROOK, SASK.

thern was not long after them in getting into what was well known as the Fertile Belt, years before Brandon was christened.

**Very like
Portage Plains.**

What sort of country is it, six hundred miles from Winnipeg, that makes you think of the early days, and of the advent of prosperity to Brandon? Well, it is blessed with a variety of qualities—good, better and best, according to your taste in western country. The earliest famous district for wheat growing in Western Canada was the Portage Plains, where farms are now dearer than they are in many of the best parts of Ontario. South of Saskatchewan, and west of Battleford, the first capital of the North West Territories, several settlers went many years ago, for the reason that the country was very like the Portage Plains. In the fulness of time the railway came through the Saskatchewan Valley, and where there was the lone post office of Bresaylor, there is now the town of that name.

But all the country, sloping down to the Saskatchewan isn't open prairie. Many people prefer to have trees in the neighborhood of their homes. They are not so fond of the level plain as some are who care very much about facility in producing crops, and very little for the landscape around the place in which they eat and sleep.

Beyond the Saskatchewan there is an abundance of available land for those who want a little variety above ground as well as a great deal of fertility in the ground. There is nowhere more desirable country than the park-like region across the river from Bresaylor.



GRADING THE NEW C.N.R. PRINCE ALBERT NORTH BATTLEFORD LINE.

**Alongside
Jackfish Lake.**

In summer, in its natural state, it is a dream. When the husbandman has filled the spaces between the clumps of trees with waving grain, and lowing cattle, it is a poem. In winter, when its timber keeps the wind at bay, and gives to the warm farmstead its most welcome aspect of restful content, it is the epitome of man's conquest over nature.

Here within a mile or so of Jackfish Lake—a sheet of water with a bigger surface than Windermere of immortal fame—I found a Scotch family of most enlightening experience. I drove over fields of stubble and a hundred and fifty acre patch of summer fallow to a place that bore all the signs of plenty and economy that you associate with flourishing Scotch people.

It was the Saskatchewan home of a former Scotch shepherd and his shepherd sons, who had just threshed six thousand bushels of wheat, and were getting things in shape for wintering their sixty head of cattle. The father, mother and grown-up daughter were just off to visit friends several hundred miles down the line.

Next day I travelled a piece with them on the train. The old man told me, that until seven years ago he had lived all his life in Midlothian; and had the care of from six hundred to a thousand sheep. The reward was partly in wages, partly in a microscopic percentage on sales, partly in potatoes, and partly in the revenue from a cherished cow.

**Ontario
men, too.**

A good year brought him two hundred and fifty dollars; but he neither looked nor talked like a descendant of pinching poverty. He was a reader, a thinker, a Christian, a politician. Twice he voted for Mr. Gladstone;



FIELD OF 1910 WHEAT IN JACKFISH LAKE DISTRICT.

but in Scotland he could not get beyond his fifty pounds a year. Two of his boys saved money enough to get to Canada nine years ago. In two years they sent for him and the rest of the family. They drove a hundred miles from Saskatoon to Jackfish Lake and homesteaded; and two of the boys still worked to keep the pot a-boiling.

Here are notes, written on the spot, of visits to two Ontario men:—

Thomas Strong is located on section 34, 47, 19, two miles from both St. Hippolyte Postoffice, and the Turtle River. He came from Sarnia Township, Lambton County, May, 1907. His son Fergus also homesteaded. This year, 1909, he has 98 acres of crop, 16 of it oats, some of which went 70 bushels to the acre; 1,900 bushels of wheat, some of which ran 32 and 40 bushels to the acre. He owned fifty acres of land in Ontario and rented 100 acres. He broke 50 acres last summer.

Mike Wagner, of Mildmay, Bruce County. He farmed 200 acres in Ontario. In the fall of 1908 bought out a homesteader's farm and everything he had. Brought his family up last March. He homesteaded a quarter section and bought another quarter. Two sons have homesteaded. Had 115 acres in crop this year and broke 70 acres more this summer. Wheat sowed on May 5th this year was cut on August 10th. He expects to average 30 bushels an acre this year. Well satisfied with the change he has made.

**Homesteaded
next a town.**

Take another district beyond the Saskatchewan—the Shellbrook country. In September, 1908, a young Scotch carpenter named Miller, drove 35 miles west from Prince Albert and located a homestead in Township 49, Range 4, west of the third principal Meridian. In September, 1909, the Canadian Northern Railway finished its grade through Miller's homestead, and from his house he could hear the hammering of carpenters, who were building stores and other places of business for the town of Shellbrook.

Every homesteader cannot, of course, locate where a railway will soon need some of his land. But Miller's case indicates what may happen to men who are farseeing and fortunate. The line which has been built from Prince Albert to Shellbrook is going on to North Battleford, a hundred miles from Shellbrook, through a country in which homesteads are still available.

A branch of this line which has been constructed to the Big River Lumber Mill, 65 miles northwest of Shellbrook, passes through a great deal of magnificent open country, close to fine stretches of timber, and near enough to the lumber mills that are being built on Crooked Lake, and the timber berths which abound in that district, to ensure a local market at good prices for all kinds of farm produce for men and horses in the lumber camps.

**Fine English
record.**

Settlers who went into the Shellbrook country years before there was a prospect of railway service have had their foresight justified, for now they are in a position to reap the best advantages of their location in a district that is exceptionally favorable for grain and cattle raising. The whole region is wonderfully well watered and richly supplied with fuel. The soil is of the best. Natural vegetation is as luxuriant as anywhere in Western Canada—which is saying a great deal.

I drove through this district last fall. Among the Englishmen I saw was one who was completing a capacious gambrel-roofed barn; furnished with the best kind of appliances for the comfort of a big collection of fine horses and horned stock; and set off with an appropriate annex for a flock of magnificent sheep. The farmer had come from Southern Manitoba to this spot, thirty-five miles from a railway, with only a yoke of cattle, a pony and fifty dollars. He had come to Southern Manitoba from London, where he had been a friendless, forlorn boy. His children were playing around the admirable farmhouse. His wife had taken the drivers for a round of afternoon visits. He was the flourishing owner of an opulent estate.

**Reward of the
Pioneers.**

At Bresaylor they waited for the railway—it came. At Jackfish they went over a hundred ahead of it, waited three years, and it came within twenty-two miles; and in four years more they saw it building between them and the Lake.

They were pioneers, as the Brandon people were. The folks who go into the districts served by the lines that are transforming Jackfish and Shellbrook are in luck; for the rails are being extended every year. They will have their Brandon reproductions in double quick time. For the Canadian Northern gets into the best country and maintains its record of building at the rate of a mile every day of the year, and keeping it up year after year.

Canadian Northern Railway

LAND DEPARTMENT

THE Land and Immigration Department of the Canadian Northern Railway system will be glad to answer any questions of interest to intending settlers, whether in relation to prices and terms of lands, or information about free government lands. Agents are supplied with information as to where free lands are available for homestead entry, and will gladly answer any enquiries. The Canadian Northern is opening numerous new towns, where there are good openings for merchants, mechanics, and professional men. :: :: :: :: ::

DAVIDSON & McRAE

General Agents
Canadian Northern Railway
Lands

TORONTO, ONTARIO, and WINNIPEG, MANITOBA



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